

PPL Electric Utilities debuts ‘virtual hold’ feature for improved customer service

PPL Electric Utilities has introduced a new “virtual hold” feature to improve customer service when call volumes are high.

The company, which handles more than 2 million customer phone calls a year, introduced the new feature this month as an added convenience.

“We understand how valuable our customers’ time is, and we want to make reaching us as easy as possible,” said Robert M. Geneczko, vice president of Customer Service for PPL Electric Utilities.

With virtual queuing, customers whose hold times are expected to exceed two minutes hear a message that tells them the expected wait time and gives them the option to continue to hold or request a call back in the order their call was received. In this way, they don’t lose their place in the call line.

In addition, customers offered virtual queuing have the option to schedule a callback at another time – up to one week in the future – in case they are unable to wait longer.

Geneczko said the new feature will help the company manage peaks in call volume efficiently, while better satisfying customers. “It’s just one of the many ways we’re working to give customers more options, add convenience and improve customer satisfaction,” he said.

“We’ve also upgraded our many self-service features on the web so that customers can take care of business anytime from the convenience of home,” Geneczko said. “And we’ve added more than 70 customer service professionals over the past year to handle an increased volume of calls related to electric choice and more.”

In addition, the company’s automated phone system allows customers to check account balances, make payments and report outages quickly and easily on their own. More than 750,000 customer transactions were handled this way in the first half of 2010. More than 480,000 transactions were handled on the web at www.pplelectric.com.

Geneczko said customer service representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday to assist customers on the phone. Customers can report power outages and track estimated restoration times anytime by phone or by visiting the company’s online Outage Center at www.pplelectric.com.

To reach PPL Electric Utilities by phone, dial 1-800-342-5775 (1-800-DIAL-PPL).

PPL Electric Utilities, a subsidiary of PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL), provides electric delivery service to 1.4 million customers in 29 counties of eastern and central Pennsylvania and has consistently ranked among the best companies for customer service in the United States.

For further information: contact Ryan Hill, 610-774-5997 or rwhill@pplweb.com

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